

OCTOBER 2006

# Facets

FOR WOMEN

## Painting a doorway to the divine

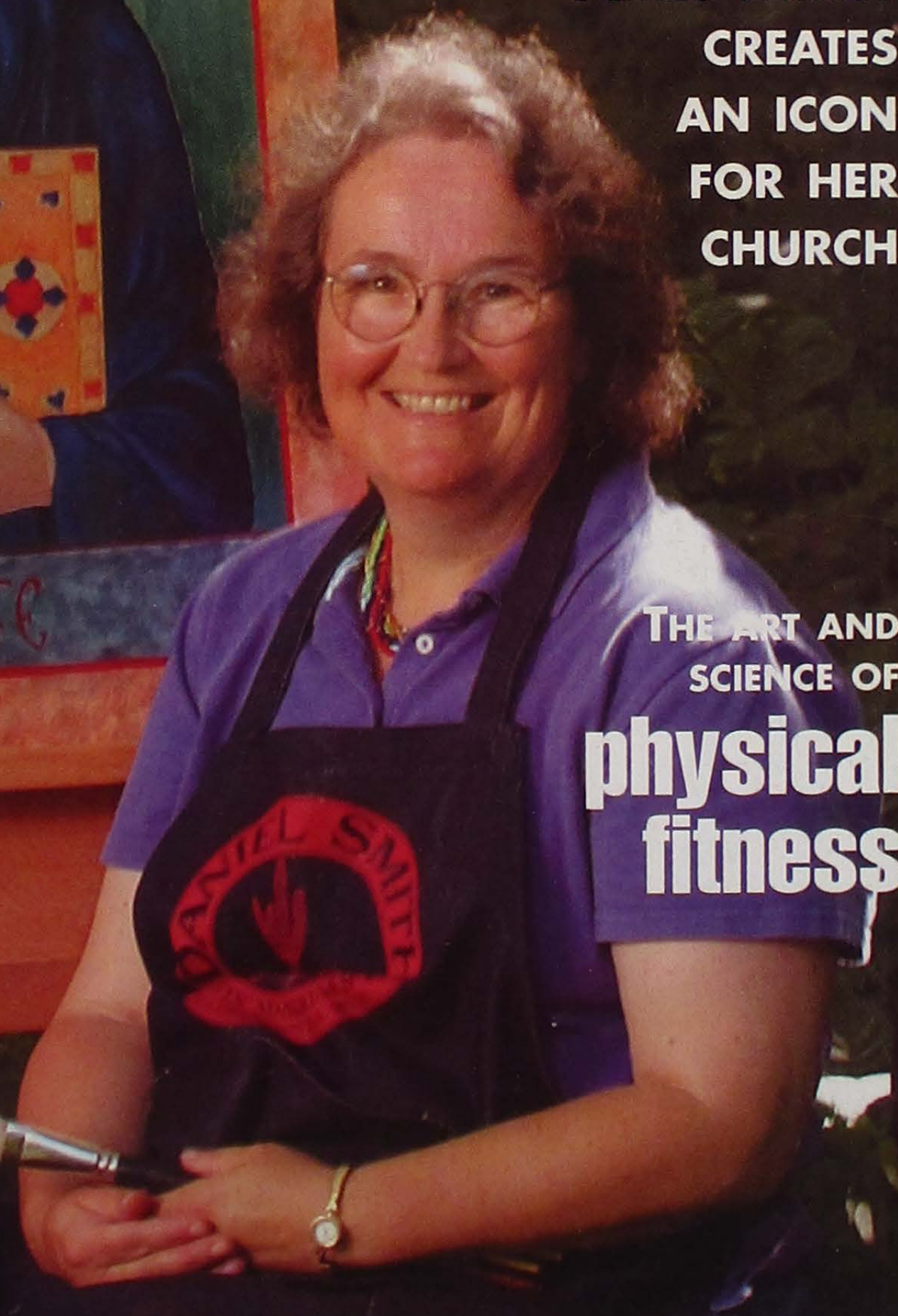
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CHURCH

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# NOTES

## from the newsroom

By Heidi Marttila-Losure

**M**y mother has a plaque hanging in her kitchen that reads, "Success is being able to live your life in your own way."

I know that for her, spending her time weaving held that allure. She had been a teacher for 16 years in Finland before she moved to the United States to marry my dad. She then traded days spent in a classroom for days as a farmer's wife, and as a mother to my sister and me. There wasn't much time or space for weaving at first, but as my sister and I took less of her attention and after we moved into a larger house, Mom made room for her craft. She didn't let go of her teaching skills, though — she still teaches Finnish language skills at the Concordia Language Villages twice a year, and as a master artist, she has had three apprentices so far and is teaching a fourth. I'd say, by the plaque's definition, my mom has achieved success.

Some of the women featured in this month's issue of Facets have been lucky enough to be able to follow their "own way," too.

Artist Chris Cowan's "way" is a spiritual one; her calling to become a member of the Third Order of St. Francis has delineated the path she intends to follow, and her art, especially the icon she has recently painted, is an intentional part of the journey.

Musician Paula Forrest has made a complete musical life out of the parts that called to her: She is a concert presenter, a teacher, and an accompanist, and thrilled to be able to be all three.

Of course, the life of an artist isn't always easy; even artists have bills to pay. Three local artists talked to Karen Petersen about how they make a living, or try to, from their art.

And if all this talk of art has inspired you to create, find out what Lee Anne Willson has to say about reviving your creativity (there *is* a creative bone in your body, no matter what you say).

There's much more in this art-inspired issue. Here's hoping your "own way" includes a little extra time to catch up on Facets!

— Heidi Marttila-Losure, editor



WELCOME TO

# Facets

Facet > 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.

2. The particular angle from which something is considered.

FACETS IS A SUPPLEMENT TO THE TRIBUNE

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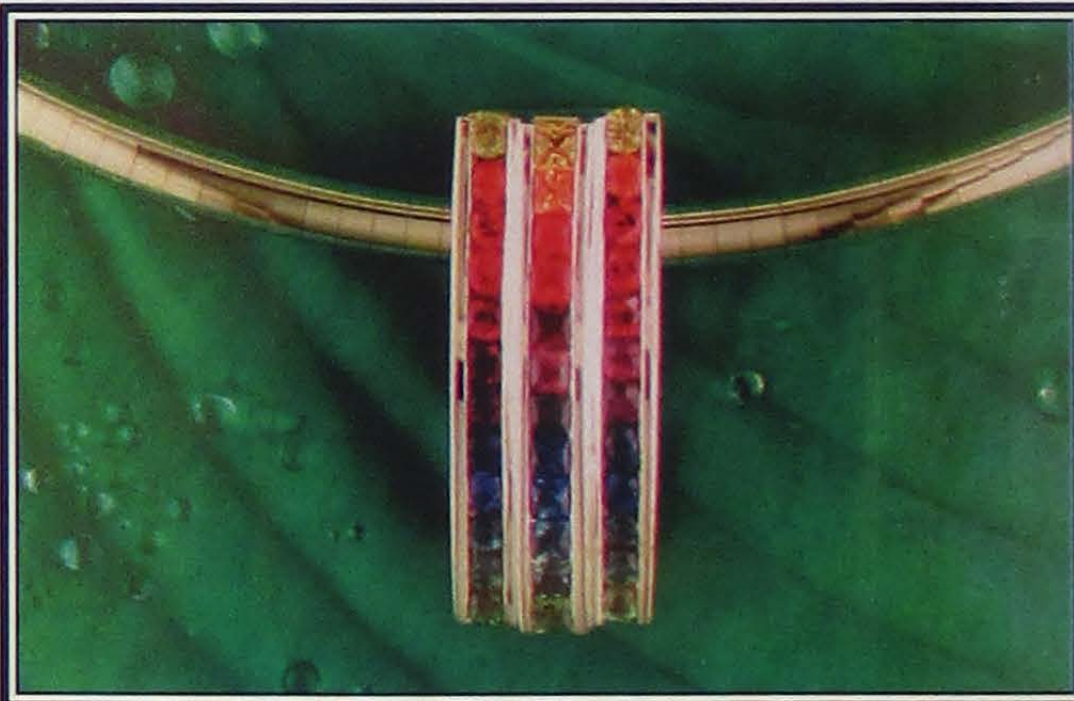
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# Harmony

THREE PARTS IN

*Ames woman puts together music administration, teaching and accompanying to create a career*

By Heidi Marttila-Losure

Paula Forrest doesn't literally have a hat rack next to her phone. But she does say that sometimes she pauses before she answers the ring to consider which hat she should put on — that of a concert presenter? Or a teacher? Or an accompanist?

"It could be a manager in New York hoping to place a string quartet on our Town & Gown concert series, or someone desperate for an accompanist, or one of my private students — or just a friend calling to set up a lunch date," Forrest said.

She generally goes with the safest bet — just saying "hello!"

Forrest has pieced together three musical callings to create a career: She is the artistic director for the Ames Town & Gown Chamber Music Association; she teaches piano to about 25 students each week; and she works as an accompanist, both for the Iowa State University Music Department and free-lance. Forrest describes it as a musical career divided into thirds, although it adds up to about one and a half jobs — a math equation that some might find taxing.

But Forrest says she loves the variety.

"It's different every day," she said. "They are three very different aspects of music, but they all fit together.

"I see life from three different musical perspectives."

## Immersed in music

Paula Forrest's way of making a living won't come as a surprise to anyone taking a peek at her family tree.

Her father is a professional clarinetist and professor of music who is still teaching and performing at the age of 88; her mother was a professional pianist and piano teacher. Professional musicians can be found at least four generations back in her family tree.

"It's a very rich musical background," Forrest said. "I can't escape it. (Music) is just who I am."

Paula Forrest says her earliest memories all involve music; she said she was "totally immersed" in music as a child growing up in Washington, D.C. Music students and family

friends playing music filled the house.

Her mother was her first music teacher, from the age of 4. Because her teacher was always nearby, there was no such thing as a lesson day for Forrest; nearly every time she took to the piano bench, her mother offered her instruction.

From the time she was 11 to the age of 18, Forrest took lessons from Mieczyslaw Munz, a world-renowned, very exacting teacher. He would have liked for her to rearrange her school schedule to allow her to dedicate her entire afternoons to practicing; Forrest, who didn't feel a calling to the life of a concert pianist, was able to talk him down to a daily practice routine of one hour and 45 minutes. It was apparently sufficient, as

(continued on page 6)



Paula Forrest makes her living through music.

## TOWN & GOWN SEASON BEGINS

The first concert of the Ames Town & Gown Chamber Music Association's season is 7:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 29, in the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall at ISU. Ralph and Albertine Votapek will perform music for one and two pianos by Schumann, Ravel, Mozart and Piazzola. For a complete schedule of the season's concerts, go to [www.amestownandgown.org](http://www.amestownandgown.org).

Photo by DISTINCTIVE IMAGES



(continued from page 5)

Forrest entered and won numerous contests during those years. She also spent summers at the world-renowned Interlochen Arts Camp, a lakeside setting that offered intensive instruction in music as well as all the other arts, where her parents were faculty members. (She returned years later to serve on the faculty herself.)

After such an intense preparatory education, Forrest headed to the University of Michigan determined to study "anything but music," she laughs. She tried many other subjects, but she soon found she was most fascinated by her academic music classes. Even if a concert career wasn't for her, a life of music was calling her; she pursued serious piano studies as well, and she eventually earned a master's degree in musicology (an in-depth study of music history and

theory).

She landed a job with the Library of Congress, on the staff of their famous chamber music series. She did the publicity, wrote the programs, worked backstage and loved it.

"I got to know and work with the greatest chamber music performers in the world," she said.

Even though Forrest was soon immersed in interesting work that was truly a dream job for someone with her education, she sometimes felt that it wasn't enough. "Sometimes I wanted to be performing the music instead of just writing about it," she said.

And then, through a marriage, Forrest found herself in Iowa.

#### Finding a niche

Forrest married a widower with two young children, and the

new family moved to Ames in 1988.

Soon after she arrived — "my luggage hadn't even gotten here yet," she said — Forrest and family went to an arts fair held in the Scheman Building at ISU.

She found a table for the Ames Town & Gown Chamber Music Association, and mentioned that she had been associated with the Library of Congress series in Washington. Then she was asked, right then and there, to join Town & Gown's board of directors.

"Two weeks later, someone called and asked me to be president," she laughs.

Some years later, when the paid position of artistic director was created, she was asked to take on that role.

And with that, one piece of her musical life had fallen into place.

About that same time, she attended a clarinet choir concert at ISU, in which her daughter, Erika, was performing. After the concert, she went to introduce herself to the director, Joseph Messenger. She said she was Erika's mom, and also brought regards from her father; the two clarinetists knew of each other. And then she offhandedly mentioned that she was an accompanist, and that he should call her if he ever needed her services.

Fifteen minutes after she got home that same evening, her phone rang. One of Messenger's students needed an accompanist for her senior recital, and would she agree to play? That was 18 years and hundreds of pieces of music ago.

Three years ago ISU was able to create a part-time faculty accompanist position, which Forrest accepted.

## Working in your best interest.

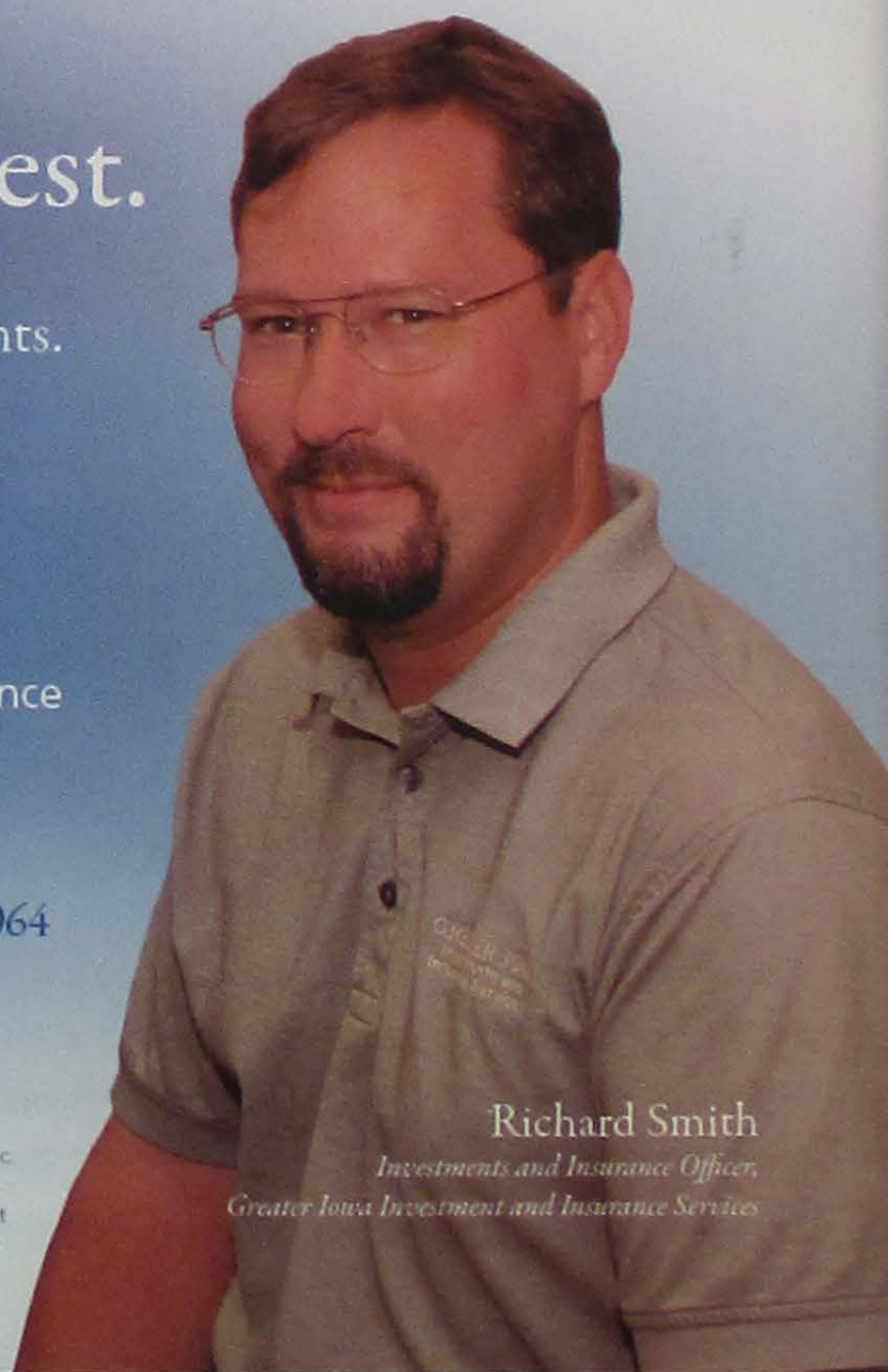
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And another piece of her musical life clicked into place.

Her role as a teacher didn't start developing until 1993. That year, one of her friends wanted to take a break from teaching and asked Forrest if she would take on her students. Forrest agreed to teach six of them, in an arrangement that was intended to be temporary.

But Forrest found that she enjoyed teaching very much.

"One of the reasons that it's so much fun is that every 45 minutes to an hour a totally different personality walks through the door," Forrest said.

Forrest now teaches about 25 students. Her youngest is 6, and they've ranged to as old as 79; each of them has different teaching needs.

"I enjoy that variety," she said.

### A complete life

Forrest says there are some challenges to building a career out of three jobs instead of just one. Affording health care is one of them; Forrest said that until ISU created the part-time faculty accompanist position that offered benefits, she paid outrageous sums for her health insurance. And even though the total of these jobs far exceeds a 40-hour week, there's no overtime pay in this arrangement.

But for Forrest, it's still a great way to make a living.

"I sometimes wonder, well, what if I needed to cut back? What would I give up?" she said.

But nothing seems expendable for Forrest; she can't see herself taking off any of her hats.

"It all completes a whole," she said.

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## How did the arts scene in Iowa look to the big-city girl?

**P**aula Forrest said Ames' dedicated arts community was immediately apparent when she moved here in 1988 from Washington, D.C.

She compared it to Iowa's political life, where Iowans can be truly involved even up to the presidential level. Similarly, a person can be deeply involved with the arts at a high level in this community.

"Ames is filled with talented and giving people who know one another and support one another," she said. "A talented person virtually cannot hide in Ames and will be sought out for his or her expertise."

Avid arts lovers who work as volunteers are a big part of making the arts scene in Ames happen, Forrest said.

"I'll use Town & Gown as a prime example — a group of about 17 people who give hundreds of hours of time to produce an absolutely first-rate chamber-music series, professional in every way. This year's team, with President Leslie Kawaler and Vice-president Peggy Earnshaw, couldn't be beat in any professional arts organization."



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# The ART & SCIENCE

## OF PHYSICAL FITNESS

By Debra Atkinson

**T**he science says that according to rules and position statements, based on percentage of one rep maximums, large muscle groups first, if intensity is X, duration is Y, then results will be Z.

Great art breaks the rules.

The art says go at your own pace; look forward to moving; change happens in its own time; and there are other goals besides performance, weight, or strength.

Which is right? The answer is that neither is wrong. The question is, which is right for you?

Movement is right. All have a place in your continuum of fitness. Compare and contrast the approaches below.



Do you tend toward artsy fun...

**Science:** Monitor your heart rate to determine the appropriate intensity. Keep it between 50 and 85 percent of your VO2 maximum.

**Art:** How difficult or easy does it feel? Your perception of the exertion is what most counts. Do you enjoy the activity? Will you want to repeat it? Will you be able to continue as long as you intended?

**Science:** Based on your goals, complete a specific number of repetitions. If you want true strength, perform one to six repetitions. For muscle endurance, complete 15 to 20 repetitions, and for overall fitness and tone, perform eight to 12.

**Art:** Focus on reaching fatigue. Pay attention to form and doing it well until you

can't. Pain or fatigue somewhere else, or motions that are not under control, are not contributing to the big picture.

**Science:** Perform three to five days of cardio-respiratory activity and two to three days of resistance training with 48 hours between training same muscle groups.

**Art:** Listen to your body. Some people feel best moving daily, some need greater recovery. Neither push too hard nor pull too little. Tune in to how it feels, signs you need more or less movement, or movement of a different kind to keep your fine-tuned machine in action.

**Science:** Counting calories is key. Energy in and energy out determine whether you lose, gain, or maintain weight.

**Art:** Progress is not always linear. Satisfaction, not deprivation, leads to success. Choose foods and a frequency of eating that keep you not just full but fulfilled. Stress levels and hormones change the rules without predictability.

**Science:** Work out. Just do it.

**Art:** Play. Find exercise modes that are fun and enjoyable for you. Seek ways to make it something to look forward to doing. Pair it with meeting a friend, listening to music, seeing beautiful landscapes. Condition yourself to think of exercise as a reward, a treat for finishing another task, a well-deserved break from computer, or desk work. Find a trainer or a class that make it worthwhile for you to be there but that make your only job showing up, they'll take care of the rest.



...or scientific accuracy?

Make art of science by smiling through your run or laughing through a hip-hop class. Wear bold colors to yoga and down dog for as long as you like. Just find your own blend and break some rules moving through your life.



Debra Atkinson is a senior lecturer in the Department of Health and Human Performance at Iowa State University and personal training director at Ames Racquet and Fitness Center.



# art SMART

*Introducing art materials to small children, while also keeping your sanity*

By Laurie Winslow Sargent

**Art and toddlers.** Together, what comes to mind? Chunks of PlayDoh smashed into the carpet? Sixty-four crayons crunching beneath your feet? Or a more positive image: a beaming child asking you to hang up a hand-made creation?

From the time your little one can sit in a high chair and grasp a crayon without eating it, he or she can create works of art. Sure, those first works may be simple scribbles. But to your child, they represent pictures or words in his or her mind.

A few nights ago, my soon-to-be 16-year-old daughter and I dug into a box of her earliest artwork and writing. We sighed and giggled as we saw the progression of her artwork from age 2 through elementary school. Some mementos were so very age-typical. In one drawing of our family, everyone had stick legs and hands with eight fingers extending straight out of their heads. Journal entries recorded early quotes as well. "I un dew!" (I am drawing!) "Hane it up, Mom!" (Hang my picture on the fridge, Mom!)

It's truly worth the potential mess to introduce art to kids at a very young age. The key to making it fun — for you both — is to provide materials and space for your mini artist-in-residence, while also providing simple and clear boundaries. Try these tips:

**Limit choice.** Two-year-olds want to try everything, but they need help focusing. Instead of four colors of PlayDoh and a dozen tools, try one color and one stamping tool or plastic knife, initially. Keep the rest out of sight.

**Appreciate the simple.** Small children are thrilled with using their basic five senses and the wonder of the materials themselves. (As for crayons — how does the color get out of those sticks?) Don't let adult boredom prevent your child from simple experimentation, such as feeling dough roll and squish, versus feeling pressure to create anything in particular. When your child finally asks for ideas, balls of dough can become snakes; snakes can be twisted into

alphabet letters.

**Be generous with cheap materials.** If your child turns out page after page of simple scribbles, don't fret about paper waste. A dollar's worth of paper, keeping a child occupied for half an hour, is cheaper than a babysitter. And your child is developing pre-writing skills. You can re-use some of that paper later for wrapping paper, or recycle it in some other way.

**Revel in your child's developing fine motor skills.** A toddler typically holds a paintbrush, crayon or marker in a "palmar" grasp (a fist) at first, gradually transitioning to a pincher grasp as we do. Hand dominance is still emerging, although some hard-core lefties can be spotted very early on.

Avoid expending energy correcting grasp, although you may model it correctly, alongside your child (heaven help you if you touch your child's paper!). Avoid coloring books, at first — a 2-year-old cannot yet color within the lines, nor should she or he have to, and they restrict creativity. To encourage little fingers to form a mature hold, Sybil Berkey, a registered occupational therapist in Washington, suggests using bits of broken crayons, or drawing on paper attached to a slanted or vertical surface.

**Offer simple rules and a designated work space.** "We only draw on paper." "We always cap markers after using them." Capping is tricky for little hands at first, although getting to use the markers offers incentive. If they are old enough to draw with them, they can learn to cap them so they don't dry out and can be used over and over again — otherwise stick to crayons a bit longer.

**Designate a specific area for art projects.** The kitchen is ideal. A high chair with a large tray makes an effective "art chair" for several years. (Consider this early on, when buying a high chair for an infant.) This keeps art materials away from toys and carpets, and keeps Junior cheerfully occupied while you do kitchen tasks. (Think

of the alternative — a whining child tugging at your pants leg as you try to cook dinner?)

A child-proofed kitchen cupboard can store art materials, although crayons and paper should be easily accessible to your child.

**Be consistent, yet forgiving.** Toddlers are by nature impulsive. If you keep permanent markers around, tell your children those are DANGER markers, and yours alone: Their's are the washable ones. But they will still be baffled if their mini-Picasso on the hall wall with washables produces a shrug and a chuckle, yet Mommy goes ballistic when she finds her couch autographed in permanent ink. So treat any marker infractions similarly, with patience and firmness. Someday you might even laugh — as did one friend of mine (a day-care teacher, no less). Her child, to her chagrin, had drawn circles with black marker on her friend's white cat: whose name aptly was, believe it or not, Bulls-Eye!



© 2002-2006 Laurie Winslow Sargent. Portions of this article were previously published in *Parenting* magazine. To read additional articles and book excerpts by Laurie, a former

Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant turned author/speaker/mother of three, visit [www.ParentChildPlay.com](http://www.ParentChildPlay.com).



# Color yourself HEALTHY

*Want to make more healthy food choices?*

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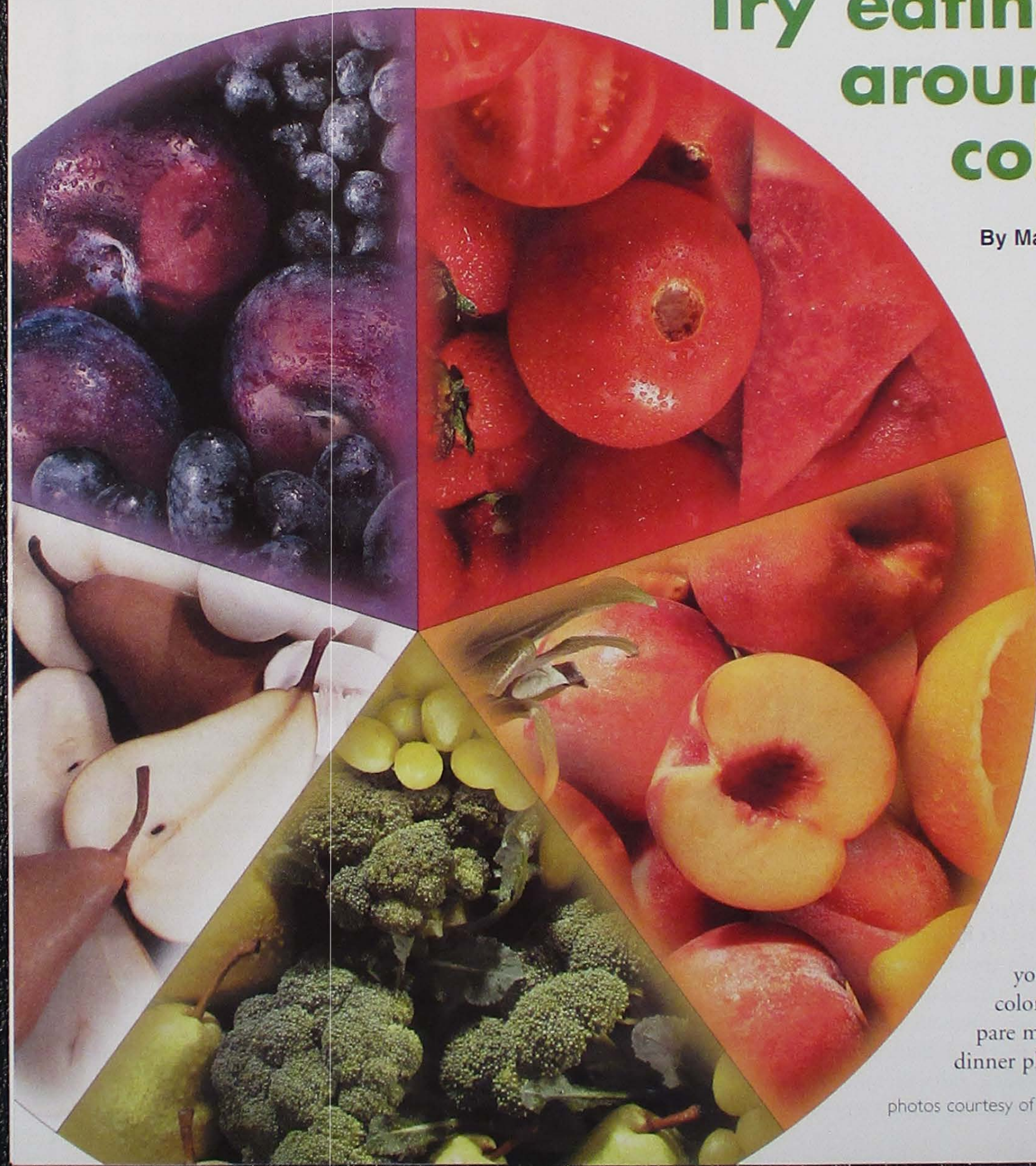
By Madeleine Rothmayer

Choosing vegetables and fruits that include a wide variety of bright colors is a good way to add a smorgasbord of health-supporting phytochemicals to your diet. Lutein (yellow), lycopene (red), carotene (orange) and anthocyanin (blue) are a few of the many pigments found in plants that when eaten regularly can bolster our resistance to disease and aging.

When choosing fruits and vegetables, go for variety. Each type of vegetable or fruit contains a unique combination of pigments; the red in beets provide a different group of phytochemicals than the red in tomatoes. Choosing widely from among all the color groups is a good way to maintain a health-supporting diet.

Here are a few recipes to inspire you. By choosing from a wide spectrum of colorful fruits and vegetables when you prepare meals for yourself and your family, your dinner plate can become a work of art!

photos courtesy of USDA Web site





**BLUE  
PURPLE:**

Blueberries  
Dates  
Eggplant  
Grapes  
Plums  
Prunes  
Raisins  
Red cabbage

**GREEN:**

Avocado  
Bok choy  
Broccoli  
Cucumber  
Kiwi fruit  
Peas  
Spinach

**ORANGE/  
YELLOW:**

Apricots  
Carrots  
Mangoes  
Melon  
Oranges  
Papaya  
Pineapple  
Pumpkin  
Sweet potatoes  
Yellow corn

**RED:**

Beets  
Cherries  
Guava  
Red and pink  
grapefruits  
Strawberries  
Raspberries  
Tomatoes  
Watermelon

**WHITE:**

Garlic  
Onions  
Leeks\*

*\*White vegetables do not provide pigment-based sources of phytochemicals, but they do provide allicin, which helps lower cholesterol and blood pressure and increases the body's ability to fight infections.*

**Broccoli Salad with Dried Cranberries (green and red)**

From *Epicurious.com*:

[http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/recipe\\_views/views/108810](http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/recipe_views/views/108810)

4 cups broccoli florets (from about 1 1/2 pounds broccoli)  
1/4 cup red wine vinegar  
1/4 cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons honey  
1 garlic clove, minced  
1/4 cup thinly sliced red onion  
3 tablespoons dried sweetened cranberries

Steam broccoli until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Rinse under cold water; drain.

Whisk vinegar, honey and garlic in large bowl to blend. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add red onion and cranberries to dressing. Let stand until cranberries soften slightly, about 30 minutes. Add broccoli to onion mixture and toss to coat. Sprinkle with pepper. Divide salad among plates.

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## Thyme-Roasted Sweet Potatoes (orange)

From *Epicurious.com*:

[http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/recipe\\_views/views/233085](http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/recipe_views/views/233085)

Add a savory note to the natural sweetness of sweet potatoes by roasting with garlic and thyme.

4 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 1/2-inch-thick rounds  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
4 large garlic cloves, minced  
1/3 cup fresh thyme leaves, plus 6 thyme sprigs for garnish  
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt  
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Preheat oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit. In large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and toss. Arrange potato slices in single layer on a heavyweight rimmed baking sheet or in a 13x9-inch baking dish. Place on top rack of oven and roast until tender and slightly browned, about 40 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature, garnished with thyme sprigs.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

### FACETS WANTS RECIPES!

For the December issue, Facets will feature savory holiday dishes. Do you have a stuffing recipe that's out of this world? Or a sweet potato casserole recipe the relatives are still raving about? Send it to Facets! E-mail recipes to [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com) with "December recipe" in the subject line, or send it to The Tribune, Attn: Heidi Marttila-Losure, 317 5th St., Ames IA 50010. Space will be limited so we can't guarantee publication of all recipes. The deadline for submission is Monday, Oct. 23.

## Red Rogue's Delight Salad (purple)

From *Laurel's Kitchen*, Ten Speed Press, 1986

3 cups finely sliced red cabbage  
1/4 cup chopped red onion  
2 Tablespoons olive oil  
1 Tablespoon lemon juice  
1/4 cup orange juice  
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
freshly ground black pepper  
1/4 cup toasted sunflower seeds or toasted almond slivers

Combine the red cabbage and onion. Whisk together oil, lemon juice, orange juice, mustard, salt and pepper and toss with cabbage mixture. Adjust seasonings to taste. Just before serving, sprinkle with toasted sunflower seeds or nuts.

### References:

5-a-Day Program: <http://www.5aday.gov/>

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: <http://www.fao.org/english/newsroom/focus/2003/fruitveg3.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/5aday/index.htm>

Madeleine Rothmayer is a free-lance writer who lives in Ames. She can be reached at [mrothmay@gmail.com](mailto:mrothmay@gmail.com)

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Her name: Aida Villarreal-Licon  
Her poem: Where I'm from  
Her photographer: small dog productions



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  - tailbone under
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- Study investment statement - what is my asset allocation?

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# ART FOR AMES

*It is a fact of life that people need art.*

*Founders of the Octagon Center for the Arts saw the need for art in the community 40 years ago.*



Jewelry by Martha Benson



Dr. Starr, a puppet by Veronika Ruedenberg and Nancy Fawcett Frazier



Fiber art by Priscilla Sage



From left, Veronika Ruedenberg, Martha Benson, Priscilla Sage and Janet Squires were able to gather Octagons 30th anniversary celebration in 1996. Ruedenberg and Squires have died since that celebration; their memories will be honored along with the Octagon's 40th birthday.

**By Kathy Stevens**

*Director of the Octagon Center for the Arts*

**I**t is a fact of life that people need art. Many years ago, people decorated their caves and recorded their history through art on the walls. We still put art on the walls, but we've evolved into beings who need art in other ways, too. Experiences with art contribute to individual development as well as to community development.

These facts of life were recognized in 1996 by four Ames women who rented an octagon-shaped house for an arts center. This was a risk for them; they had no visible means of support for an arts center. They just knew that the community needed to experience art on a personal level.

The women were Martha Benson, Veronika Ruedenberg, Priscilla Sage, and Janet Squires. Their husbands, whose signatures appear on the articles of incorporation, were also

instrumental in getting the show off the ground.

Today the Octagon Center for the Arts is a unique community arts center with an impressive exhibit schedule, many kinds of art classes and a comprehensive art shop. The Octagon Art Festival, held the last Sunday in September, is the largest annual event in the Ames Main Street Cultural District.

A staff of six professionals plan and implement Octagon programming and events along with a host of volunteers from the community, including the Board of Trustees.

When the Octagon began operation on Jan. 23, 1966, 50 memberships were purchased on opening day, with 200 members by the end of the year. The founding women will be honored as part of the celebration of the 40th birthday of the Octagon with an exhibit that

opens Oct. 20.

The main gallery will be filled with puppets made by Veronika Ruedenberg and her puppeteer partner, Nancy Fawcett Frazier. Dr. Starr was a star of one of their productions. In real life, he is the person who designed and built the octagon house; in the puppet world, he arrived on a star ship. A puppet show including Dr. Starr will be performed on Sunday, Oct. 22.

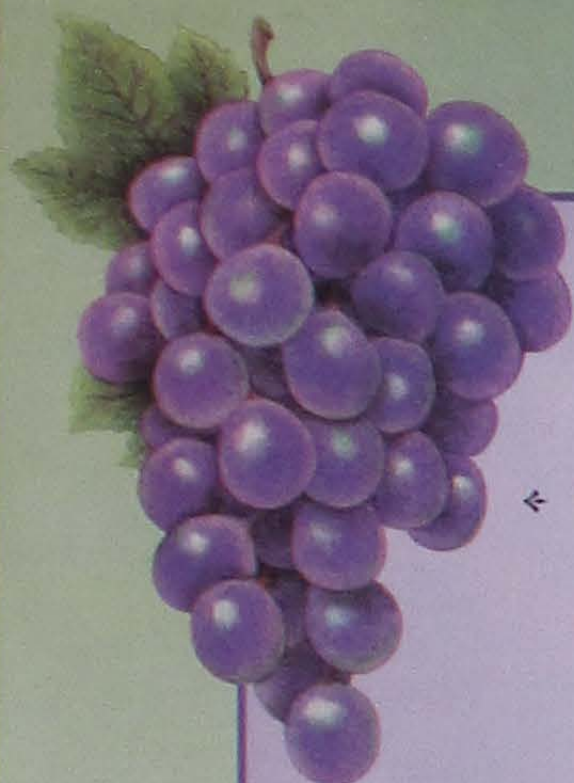
Jewelry by Martha Benson and fiber art by Priscilla Sage will be on display in the smaller gallery. Both are widely respected artists who are still producing treasures. The exhibit will include exhilarating and impressive recent works.

Stop by the Octagon this month to experience the artistic vision of these foresighted women, and to celebrate the Octagon's 40 years of meeting the community's artistic needs.



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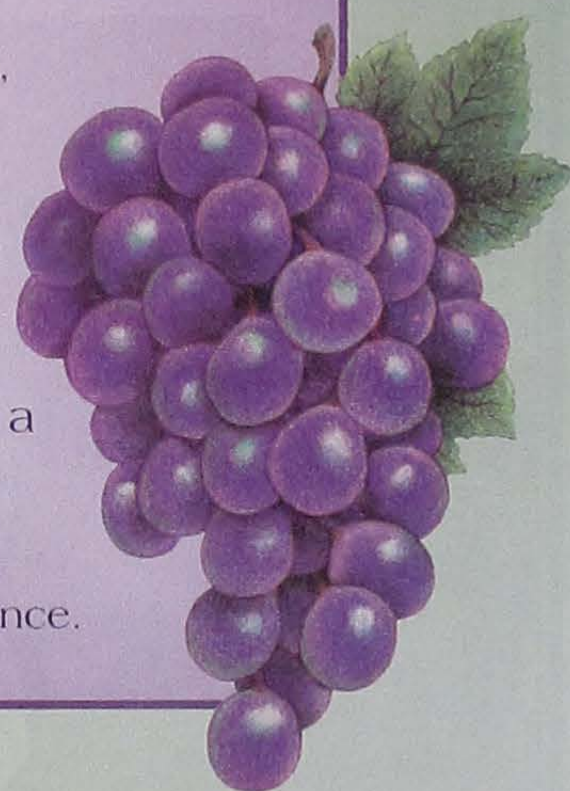
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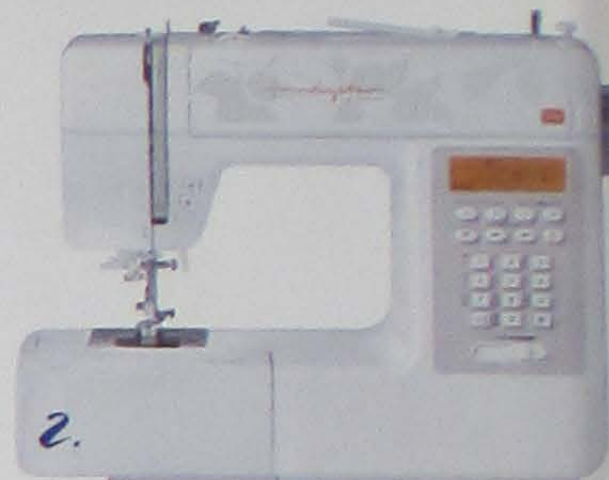
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# PAINTING A doorway to the DIVINE

By Heidi Marttila-Losure

## AMES ARTIST CREATES AN ICON FOR HER CHURCH



By ANDREW RULLESTAD

Landscape painter Chris Cowan recently made her profession vows for The Society of St. Francis, and as part of that, she promises to consecrate her daily work to God. Painting an icon was an act of thanksgiving for reaching that point in her spiritual journey.

**U**ntil a few months ago, Chris Cowan's work space at Creative Artists

*Studios of Ames had only one doorway in it, leading down the hall, around several corners, up the stairs and out into the world.*

*Now there's another doorway in the corner of the room, leading to another place entirely.*

*Artist Chris Cowan said her spiritual journey led her to paint an icon, a religious image intended to be a doorway between the soul and the divine. The icon will soon find a home in Cowan's church, Lord of Life Lutheran in Ames.*

### Faith in images

Chris Cowan grew up Roman Catholic, a faith tradition that surrounded her with religious art and statues.

"So it was natural for me to respond to visual images of spirituality," she said.

As her faith education grew beyond her own faith tradition, she learned about icons, which are an important part of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. The use of icons became widespread about a thousand years ago, and they are still vital to the Orthodox faith today.

"In Orthodox tradition, icons

are considered as sacred as the holy word of God," Cowan said. "People venerate the icons. They are all treated with tremendous respect."

The icons are used as a catalyst for prayer; while Orthodox believers pray before the icons, they are not praying to the icons. They are using the icon to help them focus on the divine being in the image.

Cowan found the images compelling. She understood the desire to see, in some sense, the being to which she was praying, especially when the rest of the world provides so much in the

way of visual distractions.

"Seeing the divine is a challenge for us in our modern-day lives," she said. "Spending time in prayer, we need all the support we can get."

And icons can provide some of that support, she said: "They just draw you into a very quiet sense of God's presence."

Cowan, a landscape artist, felt called to paint an icon after seeing an image of Jesus offering bread and wine in a Franciscan newsletter "that really touched my heart," she said. "I wanted to bring another image like that into the world."





She eventually tried her hand at painting a few small icons. But this was not as simple as approaching a panel with a brush.

"You don't just say, 'OK, so I think I'll paint an icon now,'" Cowan said. "It doesn't work that way."

Both the basic design of icons as well as the process for creating them have been handed down over the centuries. It's not like creating modern artwork, when an artist works from his or her creative self, Cowan said. With icons, there's a sense that the drawings have been given to humanity by the Holy Spirit and should be copied. There's a prescribed geometry for icons, for example — a pattern of concentric circles draws attention to the icon's eyes. Many other features in the drawing, such as the width of the figure's neck or the depiction of the figure's ears, are also specified, as are the "recipes" for creating some of the icon's colors.

Painting an icon requires dedication from the artist to both learn the proper way to do it and to mindfully follow it, according to Cowan.

"It's a time commitment and a soul commitment," she said.

### Painting in thanksgiving

Cowan said painting the Lord of Life icon is an act of thanksgiving: Cowan made profession as a follower of the Third Order,

Society of St. Francis, on Sept. 3.

She said this profession is like that made by monks and nuns, in that she promises to follow a rule in her life. But those in the Third Order "don't wear funny clothes, and we don't leave the world," she said, and members can also marry. She has promised to live in an intentionally spiritual way — "my particular spiritual journey," she said — which includes a full prayer life and consecrating her daily work to God. It also includes supporting other members of her order as they support her.

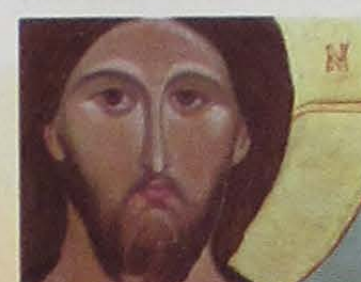
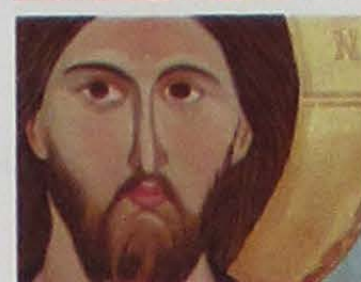
"It's nice to have companions on your spiritual journey," she said.

Reaching the point of profession on that journey is something to be thankful for, and Cowan said she wanted to do something to show her gratitude. Painting an icon for her church in Ames, Lord of Life Lutheran, is the answer that came out of her prayer life.

"It just seemed like the right time," she said.

### Depicting the Lord of Life

After making an offering of her time, the first step for Cowan in creating the icon was drawing an outline on the wooden panel. Cowan was drawn to an image of Jesus called "Pantocrator," which means "Lord of All." In it, Jesus is portrayed with a closed book,



### FACE PAINTING

The paint for the face of an icon is a mix of ocher (a shade of yellow), dark green, dark brown, black, and three different whites, which is intended to represent the mixture of earth, created elements and light, Chris Cowan said. The exact ratio varies depending on whether an olive skin tone or a fairer skin tone is desired. The face is painted in layers, with the darkest layer applied first and the lightest layer applied last. There are generally six or seven layers in all. Cowan said she saves the eyes for last so she can spend more time in contemplation before she attempts them. "I want to catch a likeness and a sense of immediacy," she said.

photos at left by CHRIS COWAN



(continued on page 20)



(continued from page 19)

indicating that the book of judgment is closed. Other icons depict the book lying open, with a verse that the artist felt called to highlight printed on it; Cowan said she didn't choose that because she didn't want to emphasize any word of Scripture above others.

The drawings are generally done after many practice freehand drawings, although there are also templates available now.

Strangely, once the drawing is on the board, the next step is the gilding.

"It seems so early to be applying gold," Cowan said — but she added that's the worldly artist's view. The application of something so precious (both in monetary and spiritual terms) helps the artist realize that this is already a sacred object — that "this is a work that God wants to come into the world," she said.

She said there's also a practical

reason: The process results in falling bits of gold that would get caught in the paint.

Next comes the painting of the clothes, then the face, then the rest of the image.

"Everything is done in layers," she said. The face, for example, requires about six or seven layers in all.

The background is the one area in which icon painters can break away a little from the rigidity of tradition. For Cowan, a painter of the natural world, choosing the setting for the Lord of Life was simple.

"I needed to put Christ in the landscape," she said. "In Christ, all things cohere in creation."

#### A little help for prayer

The icon will be installed at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, located at the University Lutheran Center at 2126 Gable Lane, in

November. The public is invited to the installation ceremony, as well as to stop by the church to view the icon at other times; the church is open to visitors during the day.

Lord of Life's pastor, Sarah Larsen Nelson, hasn't yet seen the large icon. When she first saw one of Cowan's smaller icons, however, she said she couldn't look away. She joked that the large icon will have to face away from her so she can focus on leading the service.

The icon will add another dimension to worship, Larsen Nelson said.

"We all learn differently; different things touch us in worship. For some people it's visual," she said.

The art of the great cathedrals, as well as their architectural features like tall ceilings designed to draw the eye up toward God, are examples of art adding to worship.

"Art adds another level of experience of God," Larsen Nelson said.

Cowan knows that people will come to the image from many backgrounds, some of which have not historically looked favorably on icons. (Some Protestant reformers rejected religious images entirely as idolatry, which is why many Protestant sanctuaries have no imagery at all, but Lutherans historically have been more moderate in their stance.)

But Cowan would like people to consider the icon for themselves.

"I hope people will spend a little bit of time sitting prayerfully and gazing at the icon," she said.

And just maybe they will find themselves looking through an open door.

Heidi Marttila-Losure can be reached at 232-2161, Ext. 352, or [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com).

## IMBUED WITH MEANING

*Icons are full of symbolism. Here are some of this icon's symbols deciphered:*

**LETTERING:** The top two letters on the left and the right mean Jesus Christ. The rest of the letters spell "Pantecrator," or Lord of all.

**NECK:** The thick neck of the Pantecrator image symbolizes the breath of God, the source of all that is.

**HEAD:** Most figures in icons have heads that seem excessively large. This is to symbolize divine wisdom.

**HANDS:** Christ's hand is raised in blessing. The hands also represent how we effect change in the world, Chris Cowan said, so they also feature some highlights; "They can't completely fade out," she said.

**FRAME:** The frame is intended to divide the world of time and space from the spiritual, eternal realm depicted by the icon.



**FACE:** The highest highlights of the icon can be found in the face, which is intended to draw the viewer's eye there.

**EARS:** The ears of an icon are always open, showing that the viewer's prayer can be heard.

**BOOK:** While some icons show Christ with an open book that features a Bible verse the iconographer wanted to highlight, Cowan chose a closed book because she wanted "to identify Christ as the incarnate Word," she said, and to honor the entire book of Scripture instead of holding one verse above others.

**TITLE:** The Greek lettering means Lord of All, but since this icon will have a home at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Cowan and Lord of Life's pastor, Sarah Larsen Nelson, decided this icon should be titled "Lord of Life."



# THE ART OF BEAUTY

By Dr. Kathy L.P. Cook

Since beauty is often equated with greater success and wealth, it is no surprise that the cosmetics industry in the United States is huge and growing. Americans spend an estimated \$12.4 billion each year on the hundreds of cosmetic products and procedures available today.

The reasons that I hear most frequently for wanting to have a cosmetic procedure done are to not look mad (erase frown lines), to look like his or her younger self, to compete with a younger age group for a job or promotion, or to look as good as he or she feels. While facelifts can give the best results, people don't necessarily want to have to wait through the healing time required for surgery, and some don't need the major interven-

tion of a facelift. Many times a combination of smaller procedures will give them the changes they are seeking. In addition, other areas besides the face can be targeted with treatments.

When considering a cosmetic procedure, ask yourself and your doctor a few questions: What is it you are trying to change or improve? What are your goals of the procedure? Are these goals realistic? What is the cost of the procedure, and how long will it last? Are you seeking change for yourself or someone else?

Be honest with yourself or you may be disappointed with the results. Keep in mind that everybody responds differently, and there are possible complications to all procedures.

There is an art to cosmetic procedures, and helping someone look more beautiful in their eyes

## STRIVING FOR BEAUTY

The American Society of Plastic Surgery's top five list of cosmetic procedures is:

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2. Liposuction
3. Tummy tucks
4. Eyelid surgery
5. Breast Lift

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1. Botox (3.8 million procedures)
2. Chemical peel (1 million)
3. Microdermabrasion (838,000)
4. Laser Hair removal (783,000)
5. Sclerotherapy (590,000)

can be a rewarding experience for the patient and the physician.

*Dr. Kathy Cook is a board-certified dermatologist and the owner of Skin Solutions Dermatology located at 500 Main St. in Ames and can be reached at 232-3006.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Humans have adorned or altered their bodies since ancient times in the name of beauty. Some of these practices were deforming, such as the Chinese practice of binding the feet, or toxic, such as lead-based makeup, which caused conditions like anemia and kidney failure.

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# THE ART...

## ...& then the bills

*Do what you love  
and the money  
will follow, the  
saying goes. But  
does the money  
follow even if you  
are an artist?*

By Karen Petersen

How do artists with multiple projects and ideas manage money? Does their practical nature control financial issues, or are their money matters as creative as their art?

"Money is a fact of life," said jewelry designer Gail Hashemi-Toroghi. "Practicality has to come into play unless you have unlimited funds."

Collage artist Deb Anders-Bond pays the household bills but delegates investment management.

"I did not learn to manage money in high school or college," she said. "Today I am more interested in creating than managing money."

Quilter and designer Mary Pepper had the discipline to separate her creative life from the necessity of earning a living. For many years work in the corporate world provided income; evenings and weekends were spent designing clothes, creating accessories for the home and quilting. Earlier this year, Pepper and her financial advisor talked about her plans for retirement, crunched numbers and determine she could retire from the 8-to-5 world.

Read on to learn more about the financial side of the artist's life.

## MARY PEPPER

Mary Pepper, quilter and designer, lends her expertise selecting fabric, demonstrating quilting machines, designing and making quilts. Other days she uses her artistic abilities as an independent design and color consultant.

### Does art support your lifestyle?

Today it does. I work part time at the Quilting Connection teaching, creating, and sharing my love of fabrics. I also work with businesses and individuals as a design and color consultant. Today Mary, the artist, not Mary the corporate employee, provides my income.

### What are your artist hours?

I am an artist all day, nearly every day; quilting, voice lessons and singing, flower arranging, home projects, gardening, color and design projects.

### What's the best part of being an artist?

I love every part of creating; I can get lost in a project. I enjoy each process; the journey is often as rewarding as the end result.

### What's the worst part?

Having a creative block. I used to try to force creativity. I learned to put it away, and eventually I will know how to proceed; blocks are a part of the creative process.

### If you had \$8,000, what would you do with it?

Add, significantly, to my fabric stash. Or design a real studio for my work.

### What is your simplest pleasure?

Singing: I sing solo, in groups — I even take voice lessons. Singing is my greatest joy.

### What did you want to be when you were young?

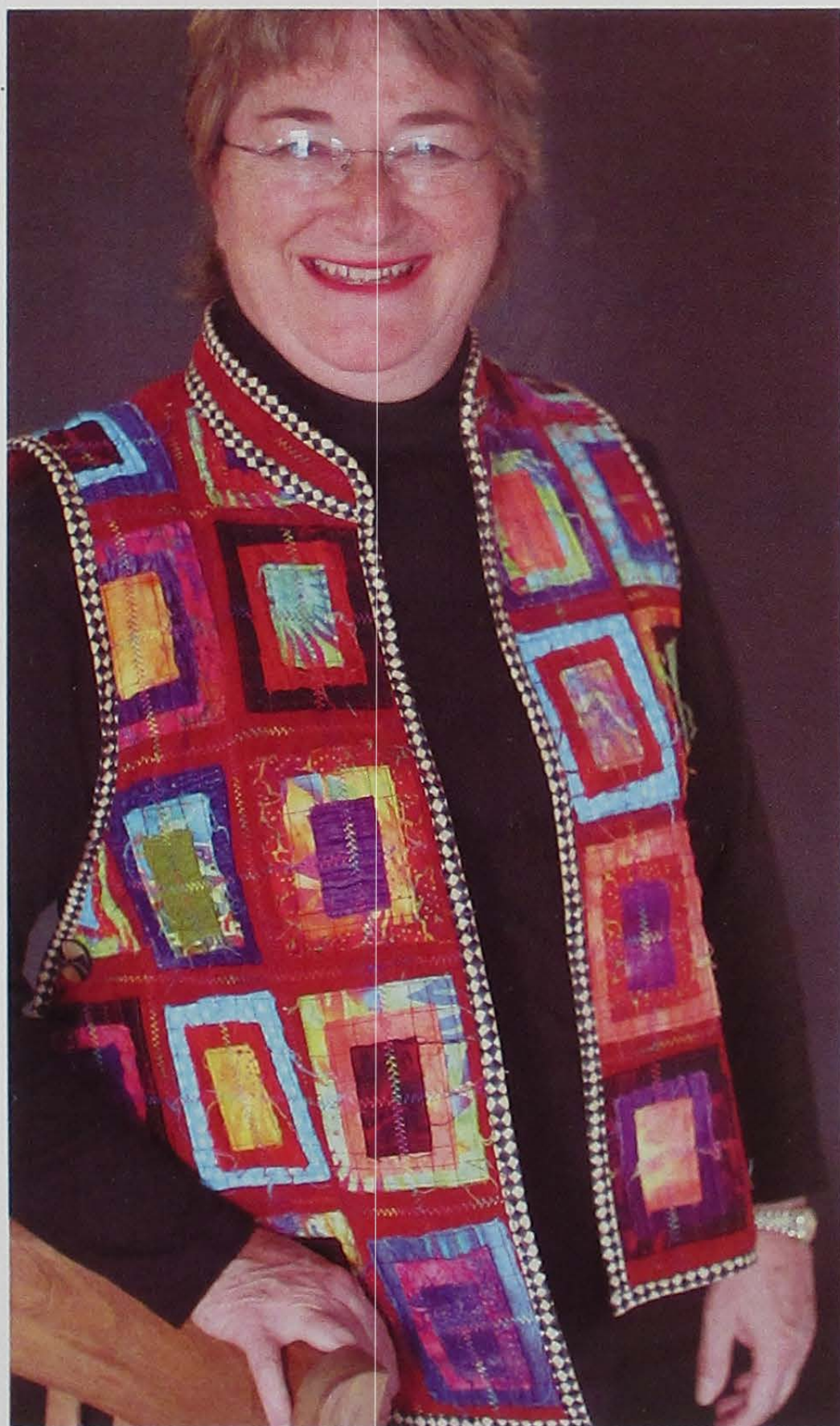
A singer, but it was not an appropriate vocation. (My) second option was a pilot: unfortunately, I wore glasses, was under 5 feet, 2 inches tall and a female.

### What big decision you are currently wrestling with?

I recently made the decision to leave the corporate world. One of my struggles was deciding to give up my employer-provided health insurance.

### What is your favorite motto?

Let go and let God.

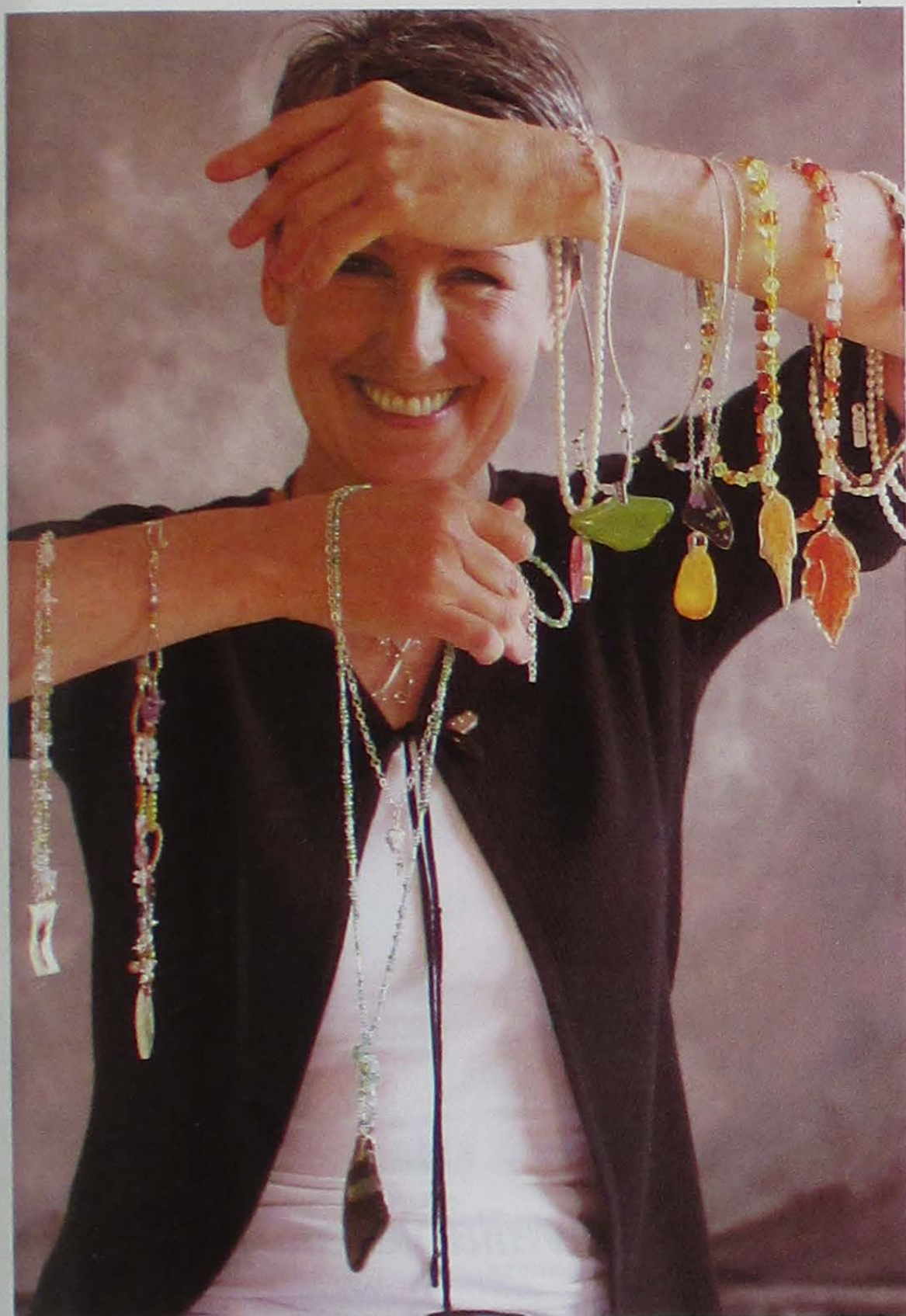


Images by Ngaire - 233-5447



# GAIL HASHEMI-TOROGHI

Gail Hashemi-Toroghi and her sister, Mary Lou, are partners in Dos Mariposas, a company that designs and sells one-of-a-kind jewelry created from the wings of (naturally expired) butterflies. A second line had its beginning as Gail struggled without success to create an elegant design. One of her children's self-portraits was her only inspiration. She captured that simple drawing as a sterling silver pendant, and created the first HeartWear.



Images by Ngaire - 233-5447

## DEB ANDERS-BOND

Deb Anders-Bond transitioned from portrait photography to working in collage. As a certified SoulCollage facilitator, she teaches this intuitive process to small groups. Students make several small collages and learn to interpret the personal meaning hidden within their creations.

(continued on page 24)

### Does art support your lifestyle?

Financially? Not today, but it is self-supporting. When we started the business, \$200 for supplies was a large purchase. The first time my order was \$2,500, I put the order on hold while I considered the cost. We have moved beyond the point of contemplating each supply order; Dos Mariposas is ready to move from self-supporting to income-producing.

### What are your artist hours?

Variable hours: I have a systematic method for the production part of our jewelry — I know how much time to allow for each process, so I am able to mesh artist time with life.

### What's the best part of being an artist?

The partnership with my sister is one of the best parts of being an artist. Mary Lou lives in Texas, and we always shared daily conversations. Today we share talent, ideas, energy and support. Also, as an artist I am always changing, evolving and learning. I want to do that until the day I die.

### What's the worst part?

Knowing what I want to

create and no luck creating it. I just want to "melt it down."

### If you had \$8,000, what would you do with it?

I would have to be boring but practical: \$4,000 to help with education costs for my five children. The other \$4,000: a trip to Europe.

### What is your simplest pleasure?

Alex, our 11-year-old son, and Aubrie, our 9-month-old granddaughter. Simple pleasure is when patty cake makes you smile.

### What did you want to be when you were young?

Something athletic. I just couldn't think of a "something athletic" career.

### What big decision you are currently wrestling with?

Marketing. We design wonderful jewelry, but people have to know it is available. We struggle with how to reach our market.

### What is your favorite motto?

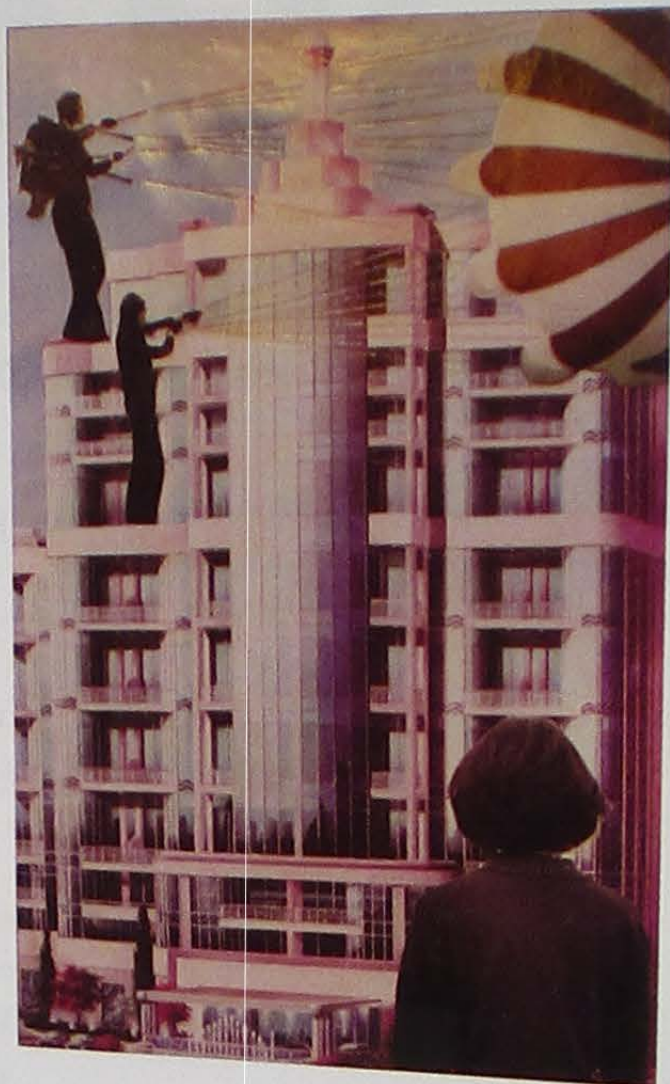
My mom always told me, "It is what you learn after you know it all that counts."



Images by Ngaire - 233-5447



(continued from page 23)



Images by Ngaire - 233-5447

**Does art support your life style?**

Does it support me financially? Absolutely not. Fortunately, we are able to live on one income because I knew I could no longer suppress my strong urge to create. SoulCollage is self-supporting; it pays for all artistic supplies and creative workshops I attend.

**What are your artist hours?**

Three to four hours a day, five days a week. I usually start about 8:30 or 9. I love having the flexibility to interrupt my work time for life's errands and pleasures.

**What's the best part of being an artist?**

Each time I create a product or hang a show, I become more aware of the details: colors, faces, landscapes. I enjoy life in more depth.

**What's the worst part?**

Sometimes, people in traditional jobs misunderstand my work as an artist.

**If you had \$8,000 what would you do with it?**

Save \$4,000; use \$2,000 to upgrade my computer; use

\$2,000 to take art classes.

**What is your simplest pleasure?**

Conversation and tea with friends.

**What did you want to be when you were little?**

I grew up in the '50s, so I really did not plan on what I would "be." My parents did tell me that I should take typing because I might have to work for a while before I married.

**What big decision you are currently wrestling with?**

How to expand on the collages and use more processes.

**What is your favorite motto?**

"Everything that happens, happens as it should. And if you observe carefully, you will find this to be so." —Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor from 96-180 A.D.

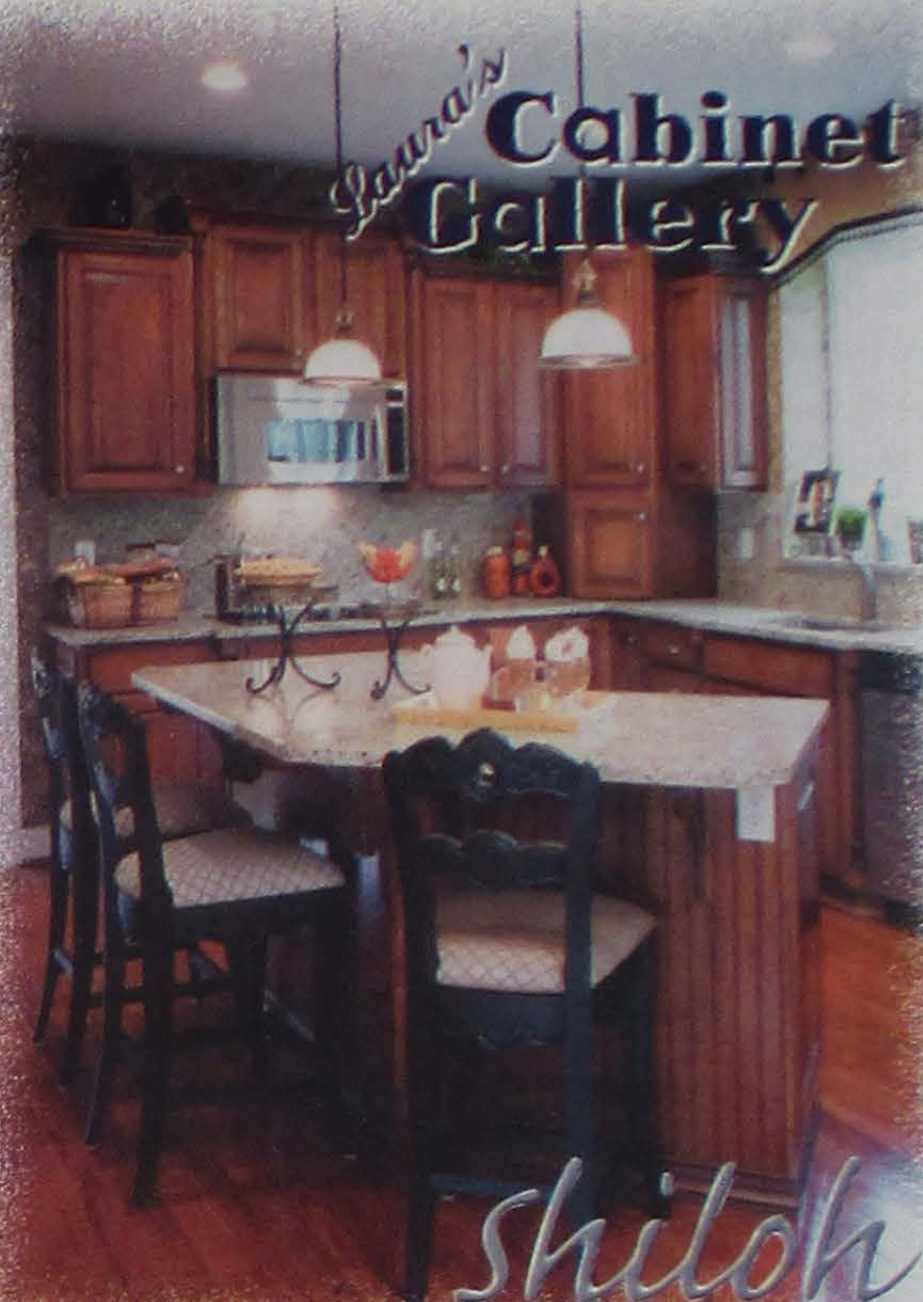
To contact the artists, call Pepper at 232-1635; Hashemi-Toroghi at 268-0406; or Anders-Bond at 231-4397.



Contact Karen Petersen at karen@myMoreThanMoney.net with people or ideas you would like to see in this column.

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# THE BLESSING OF HANDIWORK

By Nancy Lewis

I need to make things with my hands.

I need the feel of the yarn, or the flannel, or the fleece. I need the enjoyment of the colors. I need the excitement of developing new patterns. I need the repetitive movements that quiet my mind and my emotions.

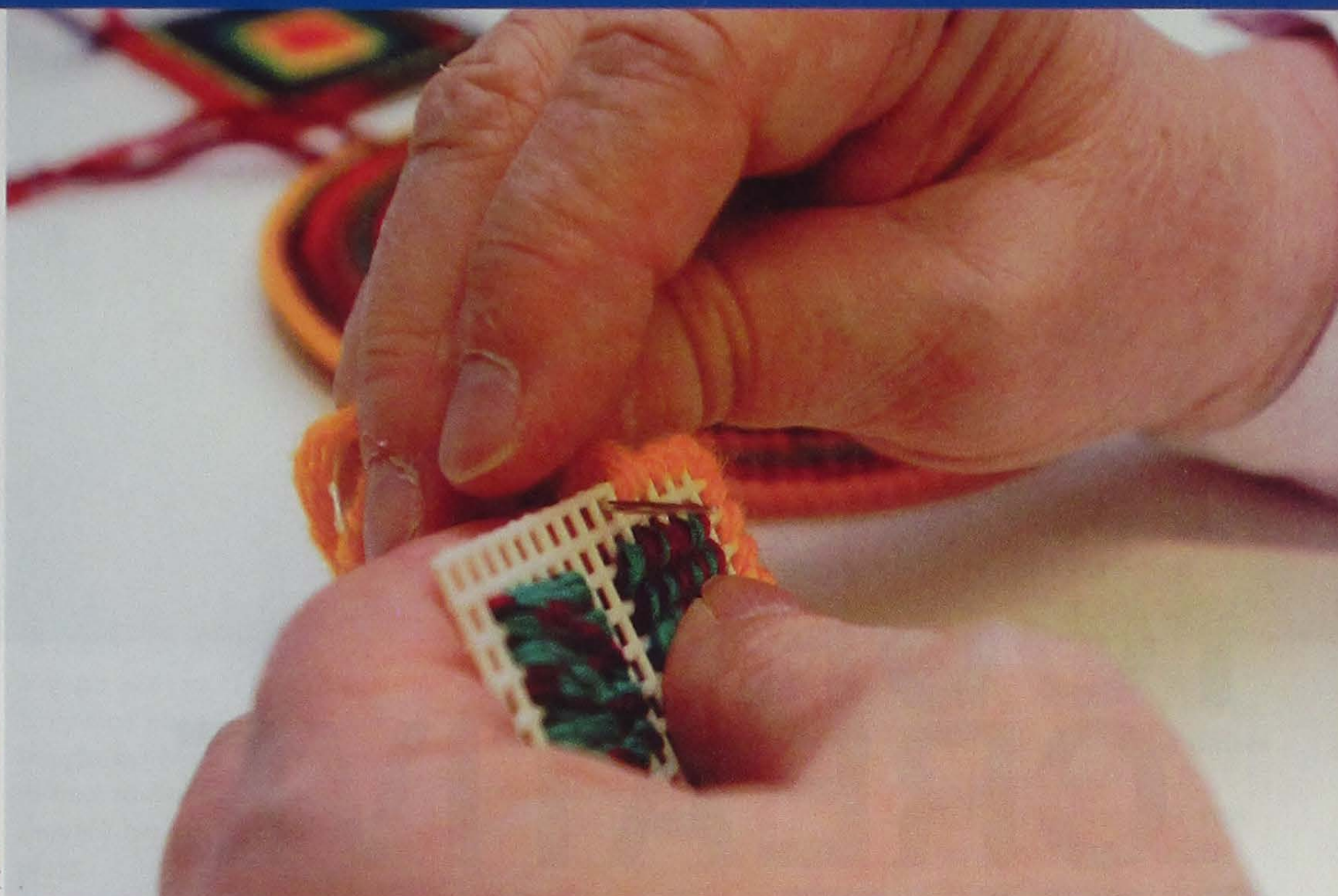
Many older people need more stimulation. I often need less. My craft work gives me relief from information overload, and time to think out solutions to problems.

I'm not always happy with the results, but I always enjoy the process. If I have to cut out a row of stitches and start over, that's fine.

Right now I'm making Christmas ornaments from plastic needlepoint canvas, yarn, buttons, jingle bells and beads. It is so much fun to experiment with colored canvas, shades of yarn, and various shapes. As I work, I think about the people who will receive the ornaments, including my children, grandchildren, other relatives and friends. I have princess buttons for my granddaughter. There are ship, sports, and dinosaur buttons for my grandsons. Two college girls will get bright colors and experimental designs. Lots of people will get star ornaments. I usually make an ornament with sheep on it for my pastor; maybe it will have a tiny sheep bell this year. Buttons in the shapes of stars, snowflakes, snowmen and snowwomen, candy canes, reindeer, and wrapped packages are on hand for me to use.

I taught myself to do needlepoint, using a book for beginners. I started with the canvases that can be bought with the center design already done, so that all I had to do was fill in the rest of the canvas area. That was over 35 years ago. I bought the canvas, yarn, and

By JON BRITTON



**Nancy Lewis says working with plastic canvas gives her time to think out solutions to problems.**

instructions from the old Younkers store on Main Street in Ames. That first canvas was one of six that became seat-cushion covers for my parents-in-law's dining room chairs. Each one took at least a year. I had young children then, and I was glad to sit and do the same stitch over and over with no thought required.

Then I discovered plastic canvas. Plastic canvas is not highly regarded by art groups. In fact, some art shows don't allow projects made with plastic canvas to be entered. But a lot of people must enjoy working with it, judging by the number of kits for making things out of plastic canvas that are sold in stores and available from catalogs.

I did a couple of those kits, but then I found that it was more enjoyable to make up designs of my own. I made an ornament that looks like the ISU Campanile one year — we still have it.

During this time I also started to design and create wall hangings

by doing afghan stitch crochet. I found a lot of buttons in the shapes of animals, flowers, and fish, as well as foods like strawberries and corn. I used these buttons to add to the wall hangings. I made a "farm" with a cow, a horse, pigs, chickens, even a tractor. I gave it to my mother to remind her of her family home. And I realized buttons with Christmas associations could also be used for my ornaments.

Seasonal decorations are also fun to make for Easter, Thanksgiving, Valentine's Day and other times of the year. At the moment I'm making one for Halloween with buttons in the shapes of ghosts, bats, jack-o-lanterns, black cats, and shopping bags with "Trick or Treat" on them.

I make a lot of throws and lap blankets using the beautiful fleece that comes in so many colors and patterns. This fabric is almost indestructible and washes easily. I also make baby blankets, both in flan-

nel and in afghan stitch crochet. I made an actual afghan once, but it took too long; I find that I get bored with such a long project.

Recently we visited my husband's Aunt Bessie in Ohio. She's the last of our close relatives of our parents' generation. I made a fleece throw to take along and give to her. The fleece is in bright pastel colors and a pattern that copies the design of a granny square afghan. As I made it, I thought a lot about her and how lucky we are to have someone who remembers Ed's parents when they were young.

My handwork is a delight for me and a way of making gifts for other people. I hope I can continue with it for a long time yet.



*Nancy Lewis lives in Ames and can be reached at 233-2874 or [nsulewis@hotmail.com](mailto:nsulewis@hotmail.com).*





# REDISCOVERING YOUR CREATIVE SELF

By Madeleine Rothmayer

*If your urge to create often ends in disappointment or discouragement, it's time to consider new ways to nurture your creative side. Read on for advice from an unabashedly creative woman on how a person pressed for time, space and energy can lead a creative life.*

**L**ee Anne Willson believes that every child is born creative.

Willson, a professor in astrophysics at ISU since 1973 and a member of Creative Artists Studios of Ames since 1999, said even if that creativity isn't always retained by adults, it's not lost forever.

"People think they are not capable of creativity, while I think that this is something people can recover at any age," Willson said. "The one thing that is really necessary is some personal space-time: a place to work and some time to focus."

Willson said her parents nurtured her creativity by encouraging artistic exploration — and by tolerating the messiness that was often the result. This kind of setting can help women tap into their creativity, Willson said.

"Being in an environment where it is safe to experiment and fail is, I think, key," she said. "Being in a situation that

permits exploration and 'playing' with things is important."

Willson came to her art form through a lot of experimentation. After studying painting, ceramics, sculpting and photography, she became interested in geometric origami, an art form that combines her love of color and pattern with mathematical concepts. She became intrigued with a paper-folding technique that allowed her to combine folded shapes of many colors into what she describes as "paper quilts." She is often inspired by astronomy, producing luminous representations of comets, galaxies and stars.

Willson parallels in the creative thinking she practices as a physicist and in her work as an artist.

"Both require a period of playful, free thinking, and then the discipline to bring ideas to reality," she said.

Training in a chosen area of work is vital, providing the

artist — whether writer, scientist or dancer — with knowledge to judge which ideas are worth pursuing and the craftsmanship necessary to achieve the desired results.

Formal training also provides the support of others who are willing to come together to focus on their creative work. Willson found that as she progressed into more advanced work, belonging to a group of committed artists became a source of support, validation and inspiration.

"Having people around who encourage (exploration), who trust that the result will be worthwhile, who believe that you can find a new way, who share enthusiasm for what you are doing — this is a big part of what CASA has meant for my creative life," she said.

*Madeleine Rothmayer is a freelance writer who lives in Ames. She can be reached at [mrothmay@gmail.com](mailto:mrothmay@gmail.com).*

Lee Anne Willson said she came to her art form of "paper quilting" through a lot of experimentation.

By JON BRITTON



# CREATIVE LIVING IN ACTION

## Kathy Stevens

As the director of the Octagon, Kathy Stevens plays a key role in expanding artistic opportunities in central Iowa, both for artists who want to display and market their work, and for art students of all ages. Her work at the Octagon is mainly administrative, but provides abundant opportunity to think and write creatively (be sure to read her article in this issue of Facets).

Outside of her work at the Octagon, Kathy has explored different types of visual art. She enjoyed pursuing projects in theater production and photography, and has more recently "dabbled" in jewelry making and weaving. When asked whether

and personal projects, and in the way she arranges and responds to the space around her. Her work at the Octagon provides her with ways to explore her own creativity, and the satisfaction of knowing her work enriches the creative lives of many children and adults in Ames.

— Madeleine Rothmayer

## Sue Ellen Tuttle

Losing her job may have been the best thing that's happened to Sue Ellen Tuttle.

Tuttle, of Ames, had worked for Iowa State University for five years when her job was eliminated during the merging of two colleges last year. The change happened just a year after she'd bought her home on Marston Avenue in Ames, when she'd thought her life was settling into place.

One day some months later, after working on yet another job application, she picked up her little dog, Hurry Cane. He had survived Hurricane Katrina in southern Mississippi, but just barely; when he was found, he was limp and weighed just 2 1/2 pounds. Tuttle, who had been volunteering in the area, took him home. As she considered how much he had gone through, a shift happened in her mind.

"I thought, if a small dog can do it, so can I," she said. She decided to go after her dream: being a professional photographer.

She had enjoying doing some photography in her job as a communications specialist, but that had mostly been documentation of the college's events; she knew she had a flair for capturing more than that with a camera.

Her dream began to pick up steam. Her home had come with a garage that was much too big for her tiny Honda, but now she saw that the building had ample room for her new photography



Sue Ellen Tuttle said her dog Hurry Cane provided much of the inspiration for her new photography business, Small Dog Productions. Her Web site is [www.onesmalldog.com](http://www.onesmalldog.com).

studio.

Since her studio opened Aug. 1, Tuttle has had a great time exploring her creativity. She focuses on faces and movement in her photographs, and tries to capture the key moments in her subject's lives, from the very young to the very old.

She's always striving to capture something that the viewer wants to keep looking at, she said; she lives for the "Yes! I got it!" moment.

One of those moments surely happened when she caught an image of a young girl twirling in her studio. It's hard to look away from the joy shining in the girl's eyes.

Tuttle said that's probably the showpiece in her studio at the moment; she knows it's a photo people can treasure.

"And when she is 50 years old, she will love that picture," Tuttle said of the girl in the photograph.

Tuttle is happy to be following her dream, even if it's a little daunting.

"It is a huge risk," Tuttle said. "But I thought, 'What's the worst could happen? I'll still live.'"

"Maybe not in this house," she added with a laugh.

Her small dog, however, looks pretty well at home.

— Heidi Marttila-Losure



By GRANT DYER

Kathy Stevens says her job as director of the Octagon Center for the Arts provides many opportunities for expressing her creativity.

she is creative, she answers without hesitation: "I've always considered myself to be creative, but I'm not an artist."

Kathy uses her creativity as an integral part of the way she approaches and solves problems. It is expressed in the way she brings her imagination to her job



# FACETS OCTOBER CALENDAR

## 3 • Margaret Sloss Gender Equity Awards Dinner

6:30 p.m. in the Campanile Room, Memorial Union at Iowa State University. Contact the Margaret Sloss Women's Center at 294-4154 or [womenctr@iastate.edu](mailto:womenctr@iastate.edu) for ticket information.

## 4 • Sarah Susanka, architect and author of "The Not So Big House"

7 p.m. at Hoyt Sherman Theater, 1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines. Call (515) 309-3266 or go to [www.icosc.com](http://www.icosc.com) for more information.

## 19 • Taking the Road Less Traveled in Science, Math, Engineering and Technology Career Conference for Girls, grades 6-9

The event is sponsored by the

Program for Women in Science and Engineering at Iowa State University. Call 294-5319, e-mail [trlt@iastate.edu](mailto:trlt@iastate.edu), or go to [www.pwse.iastate.edu](http://www.pwse.iastate.edu) for more information. The registration deadline is Oct. 5. (The registration deadline for a similar event for grades 9-12 on Oct. 12 has already passed.)

## 19 • "Margaret Sloss," a one-woman show performed by Jane Cox of the ISU Theatre Department

7 p.m. at the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall, Music Building at Iowa State University. A reception will be at 6:30 p.m. Contact the Margaret Sloss Women's Center at 294-4154 or [womenctr@iastate.edu](mailto:womenctr@iastate.edu) for ticket information.

## 26 • Taking the Road Less Traveled in Science, Math, Engineering and Technology Career Conference for Girls, grades 6-9

The event is sponsored by the Program for Women in Science and Engineering at Iowa State University. Call 294-5319, e-mail [trlt@iastate.edu](mailto:trlt@iastate.edu), or go to [www.pwse.iastate.edu](http://www.pwse.iastate.edu) for more information. The registration deadline is Oct. 12.

## 26 • A 25th anniversary celebration for the Margaret Sloss Women's Center and a 105th birthday celebration for Margaret Sloss

3 to 5 p.m. at the Sloss House at Iowa State University. Cake and refreshments will be served.

Do you have items of interest to women for the Facets calendar? E-mail them to [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com) with "Facets calendar" in the subject line.

## FACETS FACES

To have your unique women's group featured in our Facets Faces, call Heidi Marttila-Losure at 232-2160



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# WOMEN GOING RED

*A good crowd was on hand for the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women event Sept. 8 at the Hotel at Gateway Center, including these smiling ladies:*

photos by CHANCEY MONTANG



Laura Galvin and Lisa Glantz



Linda Glantz and Barbara Boylan Schaefer

**DO YOU HAVE A PHOTO** of women getting together? Send it to [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com) and you might see your face here!

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[ BOOKS ]

# creative sparks

*Two books designed to help women find their creativity and motivate them to use it*

By Marisa Myhre



## **“Sark’s New Creative Companion: Ways to Free Your Creative Spirit”**

By Sark

**T**his book comes from a well-known, one-word name. Sark, once a school teacher, offers a book that looks a bit like it was written for a child. Doodles cover the pages, and the handwriting, though clear and easy to read, looks like perhaps a 10-year-old got her hands on an empty sheet of paper and a fine pen.

All of this is in the spirit of the book. One of the first pages greets you, “You are invited to be delighted.” Trees drawn in crayon and words that switch to colorful markers without warning can’t help but lift the spirits.

Sark starts by giving her own experience of being told to hide her creativity. She then provides exercises designed to move readers beyond any blocks they may have encountered.

Blank portions of pages are provided with prompts intended to help unleash the reader’s creativity, including a place to write all the reasons the reader can’t do creative things. There is also an exercise intended to fight the negative answer to positive thoughts most people encounter in their heads, and I found that incredibly interesting.

There are two versions of

the book out there. While the original has been discontinued, there are some used copies floating around. An updated version was published last year. Both have their benefits. The first version is written on thick paper that is easy to write on. The second version is on glossier paper, something like a thick magazine sheet that would be more difficult to put pen to, but it is much more colorful. Important thoughts are underlined in color, and doodles overlay many pages.

Anyone who feels the stirring of creativity should at least pick up the book and see if it offers some.

## **“A Room of One’s Own”**

By Virginia Woolf

**I** know Virginia Woolf is a scary name to some people, but hear me out: Every woman should read “A Room of One’s Own” by the age of 20.

I know how intimidating Virginia Woolf can be, but this is not a heavy novel full of hidden meaning. This essay is written by Virginia to women trying to explain why their creativity should not, cannot be wasted. It is straightforward and friendly. It’s a softer version of the powerful

woman chatting with the reader over tea.

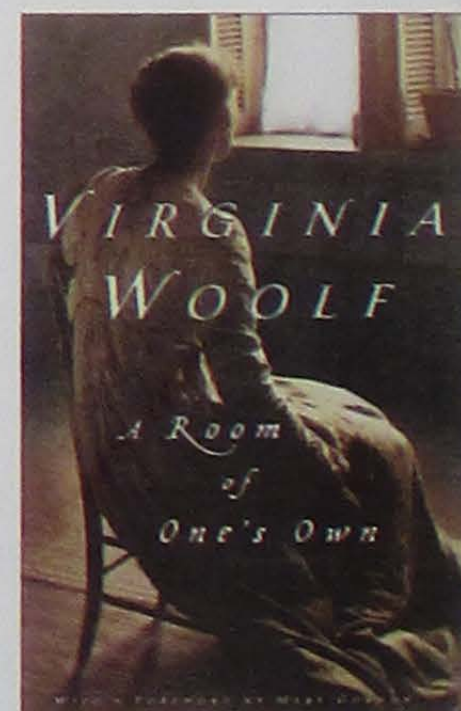
The vocabulary may seem a bit heavy, but her meaning is easy to grasp and well worth the effort. A love of literature helps to understand her points, but any artist can understand her frustration at the struggles of a woman trying to express herself in a world dominated by men.

The book contains her own experiences, including being shooed from the grounds of a university. It is hard to read it and not feel outraged at the way women were treated. The artist in every woman cannot help but be moved by the example of

Shakespeare’s sister. Woolf creates a woman sharing Shakespeare’s brilliance with the same status. Her fate if she attempts to speak out should move any woman to take advantage of the doors open these days.

She also examines the limitations placed on those without money that will speak to anyone living anywhere in the world today.

Inspiration through outrage may not be a lofty emotion, but it is effective. The historical context and friendly air of this book make it an important read for any woman in any age.



Marisa Myhre lives and works in Ames. She can be reached at 233-3610 or [marisamyhre@hotmail.com](mailto:marisamyhre@hotmail.com).



# hue & cry

Definition: Any loud clamor or protest intended to incite others to action.

## Great gatherings

By Heidi Marttila-Losure

There was a time when entertainment automatically meant bringing together the community.

The American string band Old Crow Medicine Show tried to recreate this when they took their act to Canada eight years ago. The group went into towns, set up on street corners and started to play. Ketch Secor, who plays fiddle for the band, said audiences really responded to their music.

People would go get their children or their parents or their friends and drag them out, saying "You gotta see this," Secor said on a recent interview on National Public Radio. "There was kind of a collective memory for when this happened in real time ... They could tell that there was a spectacle to it that was something really special."

Entertainment was rarer when the medicine, or variety, shows from which Old Crow Medicine Show took its name roamed the recently settled land. When a medicine show came to town, people were happy to have a change of pace from their regular lives as well as an excuse to get together with their neighbors. After spending a few hours taking in such entertainment, laughing and applauding and probably dancing with their neighbors, community ties were strengthened.

Entertainment has certainly gotten more common since then; we have entertainment nearly everywhere we go. Televisions are on from morning till night in our homes and restaurants. Radios are

playing everywhere. I even got to watch TV as I pumped gas recently in South Dakota, where a screen had been installed right on the pump.

But as entertainment has gotten more common, the size of the audience gathering to watch it has steadily shrunk. Not in aggregate numbers, of course — the number of people watching TV at any given minute in the United States probably amounts to half the population. But we are less likely to gather together for entertainment now. Television first pulled us away from community events — we prefer to stay home and watch TV, where no travel or change of clothes is required and we can change the channel whenever we like, than drive to a local concert where we may or may not like the music. And now even watching TV as a family doesn't happen as much either; with five TVs in the house, every household member can watch his or her favorite show in a separate room from everybody else.

iPods, and the latest fad of iPod video, are the latest steps in this trend. Everywhere I go, from walking paths to shopping stores to work cubicles — even at an auction I attended recently — there are people with the telltale white cords trailing from their ears. At least with television people could still have a conversation during the commercials. When a person listens to their own personal iPod concert, their earbuds serve as a "Do Not Disturb" sign: *Yes, I'm here, but I don't really*

*want to talk to you.*

We're able to enjoy more entertainment of a greater variety than ever before, but it seems that we enjoy more and more of it by ourselves.

...

Of course, there are still places people gather for fun, where the energy of the music and the people vibrates through the floorboards. I get to feel that energy the first Saturday of every month, May through October, when I take tickets at a barn dance at Living History Farms. Like everything else at the farms, the dance is a trip back in time — people do-si-do and promenade in the haymow of a real barn, to music that was played at Iowa barn dances years ago.

One couple always comes in old-time attire; an older couple holds hands as they walk into the barn at the start of the evening and as they leave the dance floor for the night. Some dancers know all the moves before the teaching starts; others need a little help. (One dancer, a college student by my guess, once ran over to the ticket table to borrow a pen; he wrote a neat "L" on one hand and an "R" on the other to help himself remember.) Dancers come in all ages; one 4-year-old girl sparks a smile from nearly everyone, especially in dances when she stands on her tiptoes to reach the hands of her doting teenage brother to make an arch for the rest of the dancers to pass under.

The evening starts with just a

ripple of energy, as the caller spends a bit more time teaching the first dances to the early arrivals. But as the crowd grows and the caller and the band settle into each other's rhythms, the excitement builds.

There's a point in the dance when everything syncs — when the steps of the dancers become a steady percussion, when the fingers of the musicians fly without thought through the melody, when the caller drops out because instructions are no longer needed, when there's a spontaneous whoop every now and then as the dancers twirl, when the rhythm of the music becomes a force that carries everything else.

When that happens, oh, it's a beautiful thing — and it's amazingly fun to be part of it.

I don't know if these dancers feel the collective memory of community entertainment gathering in them as they're dancing. But they may well be creating a collective memory for their children and grandchildren to draw upon — as long as they set aside the earbuds every now and then.

*Note: I must tell you that this is a bit of a shameless plug for the dances put on by members of my family. But it's great fun in any case. For more information on the Living History Farms dances, call (515) 325-6439. To learn about this and other old-time dances in the area, go to <http://www.cibd.org/calendar.html>.*



Heidi Marttila-Losure is editor of Facets. She can be reached 232-2161, Ext. 352, or [hlosure@amestrib.com](mailto:hlosure@amestrib.com).



